REMARKS

Claims 1-27 were examined in the non-final office action dated 03/27/2008 ("Outstanding Office Action"). Applicants note with appreciation that claims 26 and 27 were indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 1-26 were rejected.

By virtue of this paper, claim 1 and the specification are sought to be amended and new claim 28 is sought to be added. The amendments are believed not to introduce new matter and their entry is respectfully requested. The amendments are made without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-28 are presented for consideration further in view of the below remarks.

Claims 1-2, 7-9, 14-15, and 20-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Bal *et al* (6,457,061).

Applicants respectfully traverse noting that Bal appears to have the same deficiencies as several references relied upon in the previous office action. See, for example, non-final office action dated April 09 2007 and reliance there on US Patent Number 6,704,295 issued to Tari *et al.*

For example, currently amended claim 1 expressly recites that the forwarding information **specifies a communication path** to forward the packet.

The Examiner incorrectly equates the claimed forwarding information to port numbers of Bal. See page 2 lines 20-21 of the Outstanding Office Action. In support of the assertion that the analogy is incorrect, Applicants reproduce portions of Bal below:

> The vast majority of Internet traffic is carried using a transport protocol layer known as the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP). Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) runs on top of the Internet Protocol network layer protocol. ***TCP is a connection-oriented protocol that allows virtual connections to be established between two network nodes that use the Internet Protocol network layer. Each TCP connection exists between a defined connection port number (source port) on a source network node having an assigned IP address (source IP address) and a defined connection port number (destination port) on a destination network node having an assigned IP address (destination IP address).*** Thus, to keep track of TCP connections

> between internal network nodes and nodes on the global Internet, the network translation device must maintain a list of all the active TCP connections. (Col. 4 lines 50-65 of Bal, ***Emphasis Added***) .

Thus, the port numbers of Bal are at a TCP/UDP level and they do **NOT** identify a communication path on which to forward packets.

It is further noted that the subject application also references port numbers (see the paragraph starting at line 22 on page 12 of the specification as filed). The port numbers are clearly described as separate information from the forwarding information of claim1. The port numbers are also expressly recited in the newly added claim 28.

At least for one of such reasons, independent claim 1 is allowable over Bal.

Claims 2-7 and 28 depend from claim 1 and are allowable over the art of record at least for the reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

The remaining claims presented for consideration are allowable at least for similar reasons.

Conclusion

Thus, all the objections and rejections are believed to be overcome, and that all the presented claims are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative if it is believed that an interview might be useful for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,
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